



State of Louisiana
Department of Environmental Quality



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DEQ TO HOLD NEWS CONFERENCE ON OZONE ALERTNESS

(Baton Rouge) -- L. Hall Bohlinger, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will be hosting a joint news conference to raise public awareness about the importance of reducing ozone forming emissions this summer season. Secretary Bohlinger will announce a campaign organized by DEQ and the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition aimed at involving the public in reducing ozone and prevent the Greater Baton Rouge area from having to implement new more expensive air quality control measures. The news conference will be held on Thursday, May 22 in the DEQ headquarters located at 7920 Bluebonnet Boulevard at 9:30 a.m.

The public awareness campaign is targeting the five-parish Baton Rouge non-attainment area that includes Ascension, Iberville, East Baton Rouge, Livingston and West Baton Rouge parishes. Secretary Bohlinger will be joined at the speakers' table by East Baton Rouge Parish Mayor-President Bobby Simpson, Livingston Parish President Dewey Ratcliff, representatives from the offices of Ascension Parish President Harold Marchand and Iberville Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, and the Executive Director of the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition, Mike McDaniel. West Baton Rouge Parish President Ted Denstel will not be able to attend.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently changed the classification of the Greater Baton Rouge area from serious to severe because the area failed to reduce ozone levels to meet federal standards by the established deadline set by the Clean Air Act. DEQ has teamed with the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition to conduct a joint

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campaign that seeks to promote the right mix of collaborative and individual efforts to bring the area into attainment for the ozone standard. DEQ is also a member of the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition.

“For the past two years, the area has come extremely close to attainment. I feel very strongly that by making a concerted effort to be mindful of our activities this summer, we still have a fighting chance to avoid some of the serious repercussions that the reclassification entails,” said the Secretary. “The members of this Department are ready for that fight.”